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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3754
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E.O.: 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB DA
SUBJ: FINES FOR UNAUTHORIZED STRIKES RAISED

SUMMARY: DECEMBER 21 THE DANISH LABOR COURT RAISED THE AMOUNTS WHICH MAY BE LEVIED AGAINST WORKERS FOR ENGAGING IN UNQUTHORIZED STRIKES BY APPROXIMATELY 50 PERCENT. THIS ACTION IS MEANT TO DISCOURAGE FURTHER ILLEGAL STRIKE ACTIVITY. END SUMMARY.

1. THE JUDGES OF THE DANISH LABOR COURT INCREASED FINES WHICH MAY BE LEVIED AGAINST WORKERS INVOLVED IN UNAUTHORIZED STRIKES. SKILLED WORKERS' FINES HAVE BEEN RAISED TO DKR 16.00 PER HOUR FROM DKR 10.50 (DOLS. 1.00 EQUALS DKR 5.77) AND UNSKILLED WORKERS' FINES TO DKR 13.50 FROM DKR 8.75. ADDITIONAL FINES FOR REFUSING TO RESUME WORK AFTER ORDERED TO DO SO BY THE LABOR COURT HAVE BEEN RAISED FROM DKR 1.50 AND DKR 2.00, RESPECTIVELY, FOR UNSKILLED AND SKILLED WORKERS, TO DKR 5.00 PER HOUR FOR BOTH. ALL FINES ARE FOR WORK HOURS LOST.

2. THE DANISH EMPLOYERS ASSOCIATION HAD REQUESTED INCREASES IN THE LEVEL OF THE FINES TO CORRESPOND TO INCREASES IN EARNINGS SINCE 1970 WHEN THE FINE LEVELS WERE LAST FIXED. THIS WOULD HAVE MEANT INCREASES OF UP TO 150 PERCENT OR MORE. THE
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DANISH TRADE UNION FEDERATION (LO) POSITION WAS THAT THERE WAS NO NEED FOR INCREASES.

3. THEORETICALLY, THE TWO PARTIES IN THE LABOR MARKET THEMSELVES CAME TO AN AGREEMENT ON THE LEVEL OF FINES. IN THIS CASE, BECAUSE THEY WERE UNABLE TO DO SO, THE LABOR COURT JUDGES MADE

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THE DECISION. THE JUDGES RULED THAT PENDING CASES WOULD BE ADMINISTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OLD LEVEL OF FINES BUT THAT IN NEW STRIKES THE NEW RATES WOULD APPLY.
4. THE SPOKESMAN FOR THE DANISH EMPLOYERS ASSOCIATION SAID THAT HIS ORGANIZATION CONSIDERED THE INCREASE REASONABLE. THOMAS NIELSEN OF THE LO SAID THAT HE HOPED IT WOULD NOT BE NECESSARY IN THE FUTURE FOR THE JUDGES TO INTERFERE AND MAKE DECISIONS NORMALLY TAKEN AS A RESULT OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE LABOR MARKET PARTNERS.
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